

## Domestication of Difference

Practices of Civic Engagement among Middle Eastern Christians in Denmark

Sparre, Sara Lei; Galal, Lise Paulsen

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*Sara Lei Sparre and Lise Paulsen Galal*

## DOMESTICATION OF DIFFERENCE: PRACTICES OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AMONG MIDDLE EASTERN CHRISTIANS IN DENMARK

### Abstract

This article employs Hage's concept of "domestication" as a lens for understanding how various forms of civic engagement among Coptic, Assyrian, and Chaldean Christian migrant communities in Denmark reproduce and contest a Danish model of citizenship, a particular construction of both the national subject and its Others. While churches are a primary place for civic engagement among Middle Eastern Christians as an ethnoreligious group, internally in the communities three modalities of civic engagement—serving, committing, and consuming—are practiced. Each produces different manifestations of citizenship because they engage with the local, national, and transnational differently. Christians of Middle Eastern origin are not publicly visible as political or activist groups as they, along with other immigrant groups, are expected to immerse themselves into the Danish model where ethnic and cultural differences are acknowledged but disregarded of their original context and its power relations.



### INTRODUCTION

One Sunday in April 2014 after the service, a young man of Iraqi origin invited the whole Coptic Orthodox congregation for coffee and cake. He had just received his legal Danish citizenship (*statsborgerskab*) and wanted to celebrate this in his community church. The man was Syrian Orthodox Christian but attended the Coptic Orthodox church because at that time no Syrian Orthodox church had been established in Denmark. The Coptic priest was the one to announce the good news, and the members—Christians with backgrounds in Iraq and Egypt—all congratulated the young man while his mother cut the cake.

Celebrating this young man's legal Danish citizenship in the church reveals the importance of a double belonging, not only for this

*Dr. Sara Lei Sparre is an associate professor at the Department of Anthropology, Aarhus University. Email: [saraleisparre@cas.au.dk](mailto:saraleisparre@cas.au.dk)*

*Dr. Lise Paulsen Galal is an associate professor in the Department of Communication and Arts, Roskilde University. Email: [galal@ruc.dk](mailto:galal@ruc.dk)*

man but also for the entire community. They confirm their belonging to, on the one hand, the Arab Christian and Orthodox community, and, on the other hand, the Danish nation by celebrating achievement of citizenship status. The example serves as an illustration of the convergence of a simultaneous church and national belonging because these Christians of Iraqi and Egyptian origin celebrate in the church. Thus, belonging to the Danish nation becomes part of being Arab or Middle Eastern Christian. In the following, we explore this convergence by zooming in on civic engagement among Middle Eastern Christians in Denmark.

We are particularly interested in exploring civic engagement that springs from belonging to a specific ethnic or religious community, fully recognizing that members of Middle Eastern Christian immigrant groups may also take part in wider Danish society like other Danish citizens. We argue that the civic engagement practiced through migrant communities and transnational relations – and how this engagement relates to a Danish model of citizenship – offers valuable insights into developments in Middle Eastern Christian communities in Denmark. Focusing on practices and social relations in the migrant communities, we inquire into how local, national, and transnational engagements produce different manifestations of citizenship among Middle Eastern Christians in Denmark. The overall argument is that in Denmark churches have become a primary place for their civic engagement as a group and therefore also the place where they practice their migrant community. However, internally in the communities, the intensity and specific manifestation of this engagement varies. Based on our findings, we suggest three ways in which civic engagement is practiced, what we have termed three modalities of civic engagement. As we will show, each of these modalities produces different manifestations of citizenship because they engage with the local, national, and transnational differently.

Civic engagement is here understood in the broadest meaning of the term. We do not distinguish between what could be seen as religious and nonreligious practices. It is a cover term for activities that take place outside the private sphere of the family based on voluntary engagement and directed at the common good of a community. Voluntary community work, electoral participation, and political claims-making are included.<sup>1</sup> Despite an emerging literature on faith-based organizations,<sup>2</sup> religious (and especially migrant or minority religious) institutions tend to be ignored as a place for civic engagement. At the same time, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in

Denmark (Den Danske Folkekirke)—from its position as the dominant organizer of religion in Denmark—is considered by many to uphold the common good of the Danish nation.<sup>3</sup> If faith-based engagement among immigrant groups is addressed, focus is often on Muslims and Muslim organizations, and their encounter with a secular society, including making claims.<sup>4</sup> In this paper, we are particularly interested in modalities of civic engagement and their connection to a Danish discourse on citizenship formed by national immigration politics.

The article is based on findings from fieldwork among Christian communities of Iraqi, Assyrian, and Egyptian belonging. The fieldwork was carried out in Copenhagen and Aarhus throughout 2014 and was part of a European project on Middle Eastern Christians in Europe.<sup>5</sup> Following a short conceptualization of citizenship in a Danish context, an introduction to the concept of “domestication,” and a description of the background and characteristics of Middle Eastern Christians in Denmark, the analysis of their civic engagement is presented in the form of three modalities of practice: serving, committing, and consuming.

#### CITIZENSHIP, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, AND IMMIGRANTS IN A DANISH CONTEXT

Due to a general liberalization of access to legal citizenship in Western countries, national populations have become ethnically, religiously, linguistically, and culturally more diverse. Consequently, new antidiscriminatory laws have been passed; what Christian Joppke denotes as claims-making citizenships.<sup>6</sup> However, the easier access and “rise of minority rights pose the problem of unity and integration of increasingly pluralistic societies with new, perhaps unprecedented urgency.”<sup>7</sup> State campaigns have therefore been taking legal and/or cultural steps to secure mainly the incorporation of immigrants and ethnic minorities.<sup>8</sup> This has again led to “a restrictive turn” by “imposing more restrictions on access to citizenship.”<sup>9</sup> In Denmark, immigrants must stay considerably longer before they can apply for citizenship. Furthermore, shifting governments have implemented new measures such as citizen tests, tougher language requirements, and loyalty oaths. Orgad mainly finds that such new measures are an expression of a cultural defense.<sup>10</sup> A newly adopted law in Denmark stipulating a mandatory handshake between the applicant and the mayor during the citizenship ceremony illustrates this very well.<sup>11</sup> According to the defenders of the law, the handshake is “Danish culture” and allegedly a defense against Muslim values personalized

by those Muslims who reject to shake hands with persons of the opposite sex.<sup>12</sup>

Such campaigns have been part of shifting government policies since the 1990s. By the end of the 1990s, citizenship (*medborgerskab*) became a concept used in Danish politics addressing the challenge of an increasing number of immigrants and their inclusion in Danish society.<sup>13</sup> With the concept of *medborgerskab*, the discourse about migrants in Denmark addresses the distinction between the legal and the cultural conceptualization of citizenship. The legal term of citizenship (*statsborgerskab*) refers to the relation between state and citizen and the rights secured by the state, while the cultural concept of citizenship (*medborgerskab*) refers to the relation between society and citizen and how specific values and practices are thought to make a Danish citizen. Thus, in the latter understanding, citizenship is also a normative status; in Aiwa Ong's words, a "cultural citizenship" that immigrants have to subscribe to in practice as well as in words in order to obtain citizenship in the legal understanding.<sup>14</sup> Citizenship becomes a process of cultural subjectification, where the immigrant is subjugated to the hegemonic power of the state.<sup>15</sup> Or, as argued by Joppke, citizenship becomes the official views propagated by the state;<sup>16</sup> the state's attempt to renationalize citizenship.

The Danish model of citizenship springs from a welfare state with a centralized integration policy that emphasizes the economic incentive of employment and self-support and the cultural incentive of "sameness."<sup>17</sup> Whereas the focus in Danish integration policy has developed from social inclusion in a welfare state in the 1970s and 1980s to economic inclusion in a liberal labor market and a renationalized cultural unity in the 1990s and 2000s, subscription to a multicultural society has never been part of Danish politics of integration. Focus has from the beginning been on "sameness" – in the sense of "assumed likeness" – and has its roots in the ideal of social egalitarianism that in its Danish social welfare variation has taken likeness, or cultural homogeneity, as a precondition for equality.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, due to a combination of a welfare system and this sense of cultural homogeneity, the focus on sameness only acknowledges ethnic and religious differences as long as these are not considered in conflict with so-called Danish values.<sup>19</sup> According to the "Residence and self-sufficiency declaration" that immigrants have to sign in order to get permanent residence in Denmark, Danish values are democracy, equal gender rights, personal freedom and integrity, freedom of religion, and freedom of speech, while practices like violence against

spouse and children, discrimination, and terrorism are not Danish values.<sup>20</sup> The universal character of these values is on the one hand a consequence of the limitations of renationalization, as argued by Joppke. Due to norms of equality and nondiscrimination of citizenship, the state cannot put forward particular claims of identity.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, the conflation of universal values with a particular Danishness protects the ethnic Danish population from proving their subscription to these values, while the immigrant population is faced with continuous demand of proof for their endorsement of the same values. In other words, "No matter how much national capital the migrant . . . accumulates, the fact that he or she has acquired it rather than being born with it, devaluates what he or she possesses compared with 'the essence' possessed by the national aristocracy."<sup>22</sup> An element of proving oneself as a citizen is "active citizenship" understood as engagement in the Danish society, not only at the labor market but also in political life, for instance through voting and joining civil society organizations. Hence, civic engagement is a way of proving oneself as an authentic national citizen.

The focus on sameness also explains the lack of specific economic support for religious immigrant organizations. As late as 2018, the constitutional promise of a law regulating religious communities outside the Danish Lutheran Church became reality.<sup>23</sup> Until then, the regulative handling of religious communities outside the Danish Lutheran Church was placed under law on associations, charities, or private institutions.<sup>24</sup> Similar to other churches or religious communities, the Middle Eastern churches do not receive any direct financial support from the state neither before nor under the new law. Indirectly, however, they get support in the form of personal as well as company tax reduction, and Iraqi and Egyptian cultural associations can apply for economic support like any other association, regardless of their purpose in Denmark.<sup>25</sup> In other words, churches and associations are, so to speak, "domesticated." Drawing on Ghassan Hage, we use the concept of "domestication" to connote "political" practices in a national context, in this case the policies and practices of the Danish state and its representatives towards immigrants and their communities. Looking at nationalist texts and modes of interacting with ethnic and religious otherness within the nation, Hage argues that "domestication" is one among several strategies in which national imaginaries operate as "a unitary structure for nation-building practices of extermination and valorization of otherness."<sup>26</sup> According to Hage, a domesticated otherness is an otherness "shaped and

tamed.”<sup>27</sup> While claiming to acknowledge difference, domestication of the Others involves a disregard of their original context and its power relations. As such, in our use of “domestication,” we focus on how various forms of civic engagement among Middle Eastern Christians in Denmark simultaneously reproduce and contest a specific construction of both the national subject and its Others.

In a Danish context such domestication, for instance, is present when membership of nongovernmental organizations is encouraged as a way of living up to the above-mentioned declaration claiming “active engagement in the Danish society as a condition for citizenship in Denmark.”<sup>28</sup> It goes without saying that this engagement has to be directed towards Danish society and the idea of sameness, leading to a discouragement of engagement if these organizations are religio- or ethnopolitically oriented. As such, religious or ethnic organizations are only considered fully legitimate as long as they are folkloristic or culturally embedded and oriented towards participation in Danish society rather than the country of origin.

Newly arrived immigrants seem to encounter the request for sameness from day one. In the words of Salim,<sup>29</sup> a fifty-five-year-old Assyrian from Iraq: “When I came to Denmark in ‘84, immediately, I told the interviewer: ‘I’m Christian. I fled the Muslims, and you have to look out!’ Then he said: ‘No, no, no, we are all the same.’ The same? No, we’re not.”<sup>30</sup> While the quote by Salim is also part of an anti-Muslim discourse prevalent among many Christians from Iraq in Denmark,<sup>31</sup> it illustrates how newcomers are presented with a Danish discourse on sameness, where ethnic and religious differences and, not least, inequalities are rejected as irrelevant by, in this case, a representative of the Danish asylum system. In the light of this approach, transnational relations and engagements as well as experiences of religious discrimination from the country of origin are basically considered suspicious or irrelevant within the Danish model. In other national contexts, such as an Australian one, the value of Christianity over Islam makes it possible for Christian migrants to convert their Christianity into “more” national belonging than their Muslim compatriots.<sup>32</sup> But in Denmark, such relations and engagements are interpreted as “symbolizing a desire to maintain close ties with their places of origin and therefore as hindering social inclusion,”<sup>33</sup> because such relations might contradict loyalty towards Denmark.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, emphasis on religious differences might dispute the Danish idea of sameness as the basis for equality and thus the incentive of becoming “the same” as Danes, as expressed by the

representative of the Danish asylum system above. In the words of Hage, this kind of “Other” – immigrants with transnational relations and engagement – is, from the perspective of the state, potentially “a counterwill” which might weaken the integrity and performance of the total communal body and thus threaten its existence.<sup>35</sup> Hence, scholarly attempts to argue for the possibility of multiple loyalties and simultaneities of belonging,<sup>36</sup> or that participation in a migrant community also contributes to a construction of belonging to the place where they live, are continuously contested approaches in Danish politics.<sup>37</sup>

#### MIDDLE EASTERN CHRISTIANS IN DENMARK

In Denmark, most Middle Eastern Christians are of Iraqi origin. In 2019, 33,089 immigrants including 11,230 descendants with Iraqi origin lived in Denmark.<sup>38</sup> Among these, the estimated number of Christians is at least 4,000.<sup>39</sup> Most Christians of Iraqi origin are former political refugees or descendants of refugees who fled political conflicts and wars in Iraq since the late 1980s. Another, but much smaller, group of Christians from the Middle East is of Egyptian origin.<sup>40</sup> The first Egyptian immigrants, regardless of religious belonging, came as work migrants in search of better opportunities and to avoid military service in the period from the late 1960s to the 1980s.<sup>41</sup> In 2020, 2,613 immigrants from Egypt including 715 descendants lived in Denmark.<sup>42</sup> According to the Coptic Orthodox Church, the church has around five to six hundred members. However, whether these include Christians with origin in other Middle Eastern countries, as the young man of Iraqi descent mentioned in the introduction, is not clear.

Many Egyptian immigrants are well educated, professionals, and live in the Copenhagen area.<sup>43</sup> Iraqi immigrants, on the other hand, were placed fourth lowest among the thirty-five largest immigrant groups in Denmark concerning employment rate in 2018. While 82 percent of majority Danes aged thirty to sixty-four are active in the labor market, this is the case for only 40 percent of the Iraqi immigrants.<sup>44</sup> Regarding descendants between twenty and forty years of age, the percent of employment was almost 75 percent for males and 80 percent for females, bringing the descendants of Iraqi immigrants almost at the level of the Danish majority.<sup>45</sup>

As adherents of the different Christian denominations increased in numbers throughout the 1980s and 1990s, a number of congregations and churches were established. Today three main denominations cater for Christians of Iraqi origin: the Assyrian Church



of the East, the Ancient Church of the East, and the Chaldean Catholic Church, of which some identify as ethnic Assyrians. Whereas there is no exact estimate of the size of these denominations, the Chaldean Church is by far the largest with about 3,500 attendees distributed between seven congregations, including two churches, across the entire country. Most Christians with Egyptian background visit the Coptic Orthodox Church, established as a congregation back in the 1970s. Since 1996, the church has owned its own church premises outside Copenhagen.<sup>46</sup> As the opening example illustrates, Iraqi Christians also visit the Coptic Church. This can be partly explained by the lack of a Syrian Orthodox denomination in the Copenhagen area. Due to the small number of Middle Eastern Christians in Denmark, there seems to be a general will to transgress denominational divides to find a faith community. The Copenhagen area houses the Coptic Orthodox and the Chaldean Catholic churches, while the second largest city in Denmark, Aarhus, holds two Assyrian churches and one Chaldean Catholic church. Although there are several cultural organizations for Egyptians or Iraqis as national groups, these seem to play a minor role in the lives of our interviewees, if any at all. Thus, engagement in political organizations related to Middle Eastern Christians' belonging to a specific ethnoreligious community appears limited. Few individuals are active in, for example, *A Demand for Action*<sup>47</sup> or *Assyrian Democratic Movement*,<sup>48</sup> while others practice what could be termed a "selective and situational transnationality";<sup>49</sup> they mainly participate in political events such as demonstrations as an immediate reaction to specific events or changes in their countries of origin.

Rather than engaging in political-motivated activism, the churches seem to have become the place for Middle Eastern Christians' civic engagement as ethnoreligious communities.<sup>50</sup> As we argue below, the churches are platforms for diverse practices of civic engagement formed by local, national, and transnational involvement. For the individual community members, we show that such practices of civic engagement with the churches can be organized in at least three ways—as serving, committing, and consuming. The three practices of serving, committing, and consuming are of course archetypes of practices. In everyday life, the activities of our interviewees sometimes fall in between or across the archetypes—something we will also demonstrate throughout the analysis.

The following analysis is based on observations of church activities and personal accounts of community engagement. More specifically, we draw on participant observation in the churches as well

as a range of different qualitative interviews, including forty-four individual interviews and six focus group interviews with Christian migrants and descendants of Egyptian, Iraqi, and Assyrian origin, and eighteen interviews with representatives from Danish public institutions and majority organizations. The qualitative data gathered from the communities features interviews with priests, deacons, church board members, Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, and other active members of the congregations, as well as less active members of the church. The only selection criteria has been that the interviewees were above the age of eighteen and somehow related to the Middle Eastern Christian communities in Aarhus or Copenhagen. Furthermore, we draw on media, law, and political text material about the state-promoted discourses of national unity and integration.

**"I NEED TO SERVE THE PEOPLE"**

"I need to serve the people, I need to serve the people, because I am servant in my church, for the elderly people, the children, and I like this very much."<sup>51</sup> The ideal of serving the people is perhaps not much of a surprise when uttered by, in this case, the Coptic Orthodox priest in Denmark, Mousa Abdalla. At the time of the interview, he had lived in Denmark for a few years having been sent by Coptic Orthodox Pope Shenouda III (who died March 17, 2012) to serve the Danish congregation. When we arrived at the apartment of the Coptic priest for a planned interview, we found him in a conversation with one of the church members. We soon realized that he seemed to know all his parishioners by name whether they lived near the church or not. Also for the Chaldean priest, Faris Toma Moshe, serving the congregations takes up most of his waking hours. He has been in Denmark since 2006, when he was sent by the Chaldean Catholic Church in Iraq to serve the Danish Chaldean community. Moshe shares his time between the two larger congregations in Copenhagen and Aarhus as well as five other congregations spread over the entire country. Consequently, he spends many hours travelling across the country.

Serving is perhaps the most obvious practice of civic engagement. Within the Middle Eastern churches, servers (*khadim*) and serving are concepts based on Christian theology and a practice that has been revived by churches such as the Coptic Orthodox, especially in the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>52</sup> Serving means filling out a position or role where you offer your time and skills in connection with not only church rituals and other activities organized by the church but also by being there for the community in all aspects

of their lives. In this understanding, priesthood is a call or vocation more than an occupation, but serving is also for laypeople who take on the role as, for instance, deacon, teacher, and board member.

The churches in general try to serve their congregations with different activities, such as Sunday school, Bible classes, language classes (e.g., in Aramaic), prayers, and Christmas bazaars. The priest, the deacons, or other active members of the congregation may carry out these activities. When talking to the priests and deacons, it becomes clear that, ideally, the church should address more aspects of members' everyday lives. But in a Danish context, the servers encounter a number of challenges that make civic engagement in the church different compared to the church in their country of origin. As the Coptic priest stated: "Any time you see people in the church [in Egypt] to pray or to do some activity, everyday, but here the people are in the church Saturday or Sunday only."<sup>53</sup>

Members do not make as much use of the services because they are busy working and earning money, as many explained. In general, many consider the different daily routine compared to how they lived their life in Egypt or Iraq as the reason why the church does not take up as much of their time as before. But the servers themselves also struggle to meet their duty and members' expectations. For instance, all the priests recognized their duty to visit all families, but as the priest of one of the Assyrian congregations in Aarhus said, "I'm not really able to do so, because I have to work during the week to support myself."<sup>54</sup> He receives no salary as priest since the congregation is too small to raise that kind of money. Hence, the priests are often hindered in serving their local community as ideally required. Some of the other congregations have just enough members to raise money for rent and a small salary for their priest, but if his car breaks down or his kitchen needs to be renovated this money has to come from extra donations.

Thus, priests and other servers are not able to meet the needs of their congregations to the same degree as in Egypt or Iraq because the Middle Eastern churches have no access to state funds and because the small sizes of the congregations put limits on the budgets of the churches. Therefore, the practice of serving as a form of civic engagement does not differ significantly from how priests and other actors in Danish churches or cultural associations engage with their members. In other words, they are mainly available for service and significant life stage events, such as baptism, confirmation, marriage, and death. As such, it can be argued that the practice of serving in the Middle Eastern churches has been domesticated.

Overall, the civic engagement of serving as it is practiced by Middle Eastern Christians is primarily in accordance with *medborgerskab*, the Danish model of cultural citizenship. These so-called migrant priests serve their different Middle Eastern Christian congregations by engaging in activities similar to those of their counterparts in the Danish Lutheran Church. But even without considering the particular interpretation of serving, Middle Eastern churches pose a potential threat to the Danish model of citizenship since the practice of serving is not delimited by the Danish context but is also authorized by patriarchates outside Denmark, primarily in the Middle East.<sup>55</sup> For this reason, serving in Middle Eastern congregations in Denmark might be interpreted to detract from loyalty to Denmark and from the Danish idea of sameness, and thus the incentive to become “the same” as Danes. Internally in the churches, the transnational patriarchates have been participants in conflicts, divisions, and excommunications, but in the wider Danish society, these internal aspects do not meet much interest. Of much more concern are the more conservative values of many Middle Eastern churches—for example, their position towards homosexuality or female priests. Homosexuality, like freedom of speech, has become an obsession in the public and political debate of Danishness. In the “Residence and self-sufficiency declaration”, discrimination because of sexual orientation is prohibited.<sup>56</sup> Consequently, journalists confront migrant priests and Muslim clerics about their opinions on homosexuality, abortion, and female priests.<sup>57</sup> Not surprisingly, in general, migrant churches like the Assyrian, Chaldean, and Coptic express rather conservative values in a Scandinavian context characterized by liberal views on these particular issues.<sup>58</sup> Such values are framed as suspicious because they are identified with their transnational origin and consequently deemed non-Danish, even though the right wing of the Danish Lutheran Church would share these values.

Naturally, the conditions and practices of serving in a Danish context influence the internal dynamics in the churches as well as how lay members engage with the church. Due to the lack of economic support from the state, administrative and practical tasks such as bookkeeping and maintenance of church buildings have to be carried out on a voluntary basis as in Danish Free churches, and are often the responsibility of particularly committed members of the church. On the other hand, priests’ and deacons’ limited time and resources to follow each family closely is also a reason why some members come to regard

their community church as only one among many voluntary offers in society, resulting in a practice of consuming. Below we explore the two modalities of practice—committing and consuming—more closely, while at the same time showing how they both reproduce and contest a specific construction of both the national subject and its Others.

**“IF EVERYBODY JUST LIVES THEIR OWN LIVES, THE CHURCH WILL FALL APART”**

In the above quote, a young member of the Chaldean church refers to the extent of “commitment” that she thinks is necessary in order to secure the survival and daily functioning of the community church. In practice, this commitment can take different forms. One example was when we found two members of the Chaldean church in Søborg near Copenhagen tearing down the old kitchen in order to install a new one, a task that, together with the renovation of the kitchen in the priest’s apartment, took several people weeks of work. Furthermore, those who practice their engagement in this committed way attend most of the activities offered by the church because they see church activity as a natural element of their everyday life. Marcus, twenty-five, who came to Denmark from Iraq at the age of three, puts it this way: “I think that my connection to the church is very strong. We have been to church every time. I have attended every service, and I personally I think that I have a quite strong belief in Christianity and the Assyrian Church.”<sup>59</sup> Amira, a sixty-year-old Coptic woman, who came to Denmark as a twenty-five-year-old, emphasizes the importance of the Coptic Church in her daily life: “I think that when you are attached to the church, then you always know what you are doing in life, the bad things or the good things. It is like having a living conscience to consider whether you make mistakes or do something good.”<sup>60</sup> Besides attending mass or service frequently, people like Marcus and Amira are or have been actively supporting and developing the church in several ways through fundraising, accounting, membership of church boards, and even in some cases representing the congregation in national fora, such as the Diocese of the Catholic Church in Denmark.

Committing is thus another way to practice civic engagement within the church characterized by a very high degree of engagement in and loyalty to the community church and congregation. In this practice, church activity is a natural element of everyday life. Superficially, it may look like a practice in which the particular form of religious belonging is more or less inherited. In reality, our interlocutors explicitly described considerations and decisions as for

how much time and energy they are able to give to a certain church, and for some the commitment is not practiced in the denomination of their original adherence because there is no such denomination nearby. Thus, committing refers to a practice in which there is an explicit connection between religious commitment and observance, on the one hand, and engagement in and responsibility for a particular community or collectivity on the other, in this case a specific congregation or migrant community.

The very strong commitment to a specific church community, however, does not mean that individual religious practice is radically different from the norm given by the Danish model of citizenship. The way in which our interviewees describe their activities and responsibilities—and thus what we see as their practice of commitment—reflects an understanding of religion and belief as a private matter delimited to the home and church and practiced within the framework of the national. Many of the people who are predominantly practicing their civic engagement in this way also seem to be quite settled in Denmark and have more or less strong feelings of belonging in the society. Fadi, a seventy-two-year-old Coptic Orthodox from Egypt reacts this way when we asked him if he thought of himself as a Dane: “I have been here . . . I have been here forty-five years. When I came here, I was twenty-eight or twenty-nine years. What do you think? Of course! . . . But you’re right, some people never change. They hang on to where they come from [sigh].”<sup>61</sup> Thus, their practice of commitment can be seen as a kind of “domestication” of the Other.

Occasionally, the practices of community members fall in and out between the three modalities of civic engagement we have described, some more than others. One example is Nineb, a twenty-five-year-old Assyrian, who came to Denmark from Iraq as a small child. Nineb was very much engaged in church as a child, but gradually, when he grew older, hobbies and studies occupied the time that the church activities would have, until, eventually, he was only attending mass at Christmas and Easter. He graduated recently, and he now expects to attend the services more regularly than during his studies. But, as he says, “It will not be at the same level as when I was a child. To be realistic, maybe once a month I think.”<sup>62</sup> Arguing that he will go to church more often yet limiting the frequency of attendances, shows that, on the one hand, he feels obliged to commit himself more to the church community, but, on the other, he is still being selective about his engagement. Susan, a twenty-three-year-old Chaldean woman, who is very involved in youth activities in the church,

anticipates that she will engage with the church less when she starts attending university:

Something like being responsible for activities in the future, I don't think there will be so much of that, and I think they [her parents] will be able to understand and respect this very much. For them education is of great importance, and you should give it all focus.<sup>63</sup>

As such, she anticipates that she will become more selective in her church engagement, moving away from the committing mode of practice. Especially in the case of the younger community members, engagement in the churches is reduced for a while, when they are studying or become particularly committed to other activities in a period of their life. Some, like Nineb, will more or less resume their level of engagement after graduating, while for others their engagement will continue as a more selective participation in the church and its activities, a practice of engagement that we have termed *consuming*.

#### "I'M NO LONGER THAT ATTACHED TO THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH"

Finally, in the last form of practice, engagement with community churches has been reduced to a practice of *consuming*. Compared to committing, this form of practice is characterized by a much more selective participation in the church. Engagement is mainly as a user of those services, which under specific circumstances make sense and seem rewarding. The modality of *consuming* is a characteristic of the secularized and individualized member that finds its parallel among most members of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Denmark, of which approximately 75 percent of the Danish population are members. Grace Davie talks about a change from obligation towards religion to a culture of consumption or choice.<sup>64</sup> Especially in Europe, churches are becoming places of consumption of experiences encompassing aesthetics, music, excellent preaching, etc.<sup>65</sup>

Whereas commitment to the church means attending mass on a weekly or at least monthly basis, and engaging actively in supporting and developing the institution, *consuming* means to make use of those services which, under specific circumstances, make sense and seem rewarding in one sense or another. As such, the practice appears

identical with the majority of Danes – for example, people might attend Christmas or Easter at their mother church as a way to celebrate the holidays with friends and family or as a way to keep in contact with childhood friends. Alternatively, they might only attend church when invited to a wedding or christening, as we observed during a visit to an Assyrian church in Aarhus. At other times, or more regularly, such occasional churchgoers might attend service in a Danish Lutheran church or another church more in line with their way of life or more conveniently located. Leah, an Assyrian woman in her late twenties, who came to Denmark as a four-year-old, describes her practice like this:

I have become more attached to—or perhaps I shouldn't say more, because I don't go to church that often—but when I go to church, I go to the Danish Lutheran church. In 2012, I was also married by a Danish priest. So in that way I'm no longer that attached to the Assyrian church. . . . This is not to say that I don't come there. In fact, I still go to church but mostly with my parents.<sup>66</sup>

Our interviewees often explain their less regular church attendance as the result of a busy schedule. Those who had a need of further spiritual experiences sometimes found other ways to practice. One example is forty-one-year-old Ismail, who came to Denmark from Egypt when he was in his twenties. Ismail listens to Coptic songs and sermons by his favorite priests on YouTube or takes time out of his busy schedule to isolate himself and meditate as he did when he was a deacon and Sunday school teacher in a Coptic Orthodox church in Egypt.

Another young woman, Hanan, of Egyptian origin, started attending service in a Protestant church in Egypt. Hanan was born and brought up in Denmark and used to attend the Coptic Orthodox church as a child. But when she moved to Egypt, after a long period during which she did not attend any church, she became fascinated by a particular Protestant church there. Not only did this church offer her values similar to those she had been socialized into during her upbringing in Denmark, such as equality between genders, but as a church actively supporting political change in Egypt it also offered her a form of civic engagement that reached beyond the religious community. Hanan explains: "If I had to choose between the Coptic



Church and the Protestant, I would choose the Protestant, but still, my identity is Coptic."<sup>67</sup>

The practice of civic engagement, which we have termed consuming, produces a particular form of citizenship. Education and employment are prioritized over church attendance and other forms of civic engagement related to the migrant community, and as such, this form of practice very much reflects the practice of the Danish majority. Hence, it can be argued that the cultural incentive of "sameness" has been internalized to the extent that community churches now primarily serve as spaces for social memory,<sup>68</sup> and cultural and religious identification. Ismail, for example, describes the role of the Coptic Church in Denmark as "the place . . . for the memory of Egypt," "a sort of memory community," as he formulates it.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, individual religious practice is similar to a Danish secular ideal as something occasional, personal, and private, and Sunday service is seen as one among many voluntary activities.<sup>70</sup>

#### CONCLUSION: DOMESTICATING TRANSNATIONAL BELONGING

In Denmark, Christians of Middle Eastern origin are not publicly visible as political or activist groups. Instead, their civic engagement as a group mainly manifests itself locally and within the boundaries of their community churches. As we have shown with the three modalities of civic engagement, individuals engage with the church as a particular space for citizenship practices in three ways, through serving, committing, and consuming. These forms of engagement correspond with the various ways in which other Danish citizens practice civic engagement or voluntary work, and concurrently with the decrease in welfare provided by the Danish state, volunteerism has become a buzzword and something even more associated with the discourse on good *medborgerskab*. However, Middle Eastern Christians and other immigrant groups are expected to inscribe themselves into the Danish model, according to which ethnic and cultural differences are acknowledged but their original context and its power relations are disregarded.

In many ways, the celebration event presented in the introduction exemplifies this internalization of the Danish citizenship model by not only welcoming the rights that follow from the legal citizenship but also embracing the conflation of legal rights with cultural belonging – all of this within the boundaries of his community church. Obviously, the Syrian Orthodox man was celebrating his new

legal status and the political, civic, and economic rights following from this. Yet, it is important to notice that the community church – and not even his mother church – provided the framework for this celebration, even though the new status also meant that he renounced his Iraqi legal citizenship. As such, the event in the church can also be seen as a celebration of cultural sameness and loyalty towards Denmark, reflecting a domestication of ethnic and religious differences.

Another example of domestication is when, for instance, the Coptic Orthodox Church invites nonmembers, neighbors, and neighbor churches to events such as Christmas bazaars, selling exotic goods from their countries of origin. In such situations, differences are reduced to exotic consumer goods in a typical Danish secularized setting of the church. The performance of citizenship lives up to the expectation of the Danish model by making the threateningly strange into something reassuringly familiar.<sup>71</sup> Not only is the Christmas bazaar a well-known Danish tradition, but by inviting Danes, the church takes an active part in the wider local community. By using the Christmas bazaar as the occasion for encountering the wider Danish society, the “Otherness” or marginal position of the Middle Eastern Christians is inscribed into a mainstream cultural event, thus depriving the marginality of “its subversive implications by being rerouted into safe assertions of a fetishized cultural difference.”<sup>72</sup> Both occasions exemplify a general tendency that civic engagement among Middle Eastern Christians in Denmark is often neither religio- nor ethnopolitically oriented.

There are, however, different ways in which practices of civic engagement can challenge the construction of the national subject and its Others, as it is reflected in the Danish model of citizenship. Often such contestation involves transnational relations and engagements, where migrants or their organizations directly or indirectly accept an authority outside the Danish state. Some of these transnational practices can be seen as manifestations of kinship relations, while others are manifestations of political citizenship beyond the national borders. Both forms of practices potentially contradict the Danish model because they reflect a double loyalty. From the perspective of the state, they therefore challenge loyalty towards Denmark.

Similar to other migrant groups, Middle Eastern Christians’ “attachments to places are closely tied to the social relations they maintain there and the practices they can perform.”<sup>73</sup> Hence, many have some kind of attachment to and identification with their country of origin, but they are still “allowed” to practice civic engagement in

the church in Denmark on equal terms as in the Middle East because formally this engagement is not different from, for example, volunteering in a Danish Free church. Thus, intimate transnational practices are inscribable in the vocabulary of the Danish model, as long as they do not define the immigrant's practices and values of participation in Denmark.

Transnational practices of more political kinds are however potentially more problematic. Voting in elections however appear to be inscribed in a discourse on democratization in accordance with Danish foreign policy and pass as legitimate because it is practiced by individuals and not as organized (ethnic or religious) groups. Yet, other kinds of transnational political practices are considered a threat against the Danish model of citizenship.

Hanan and Leah are among the few who have taken their civic engagement outside the local community church and into the transnational domain. Hanan supported the Egyptian uprising through her involvement in a Protestant church in Egypt, and Leah is among the few Assyrians in Denmark who are involved in the global Assyrian initiative A Demand for Action. Thus, while the majority engage transnationally only through intimate relations, the worsening of the situation for Christians in Iraq and Syria from around 2014 increased the potential for more rights-based and transnational civic engagement focusing on the political situation of the countries of origin. If this engagement is also organized around ethnic or religious groups, as in the case of Leah, the practice constitutes a challenge to the state's disregard of immigrant communities' original context and its power relations.

Leah's and Hanan's transnational practices of civic engagement are, however, less common within the Middle Eastern communities in Denmark. The reasons for the apparently widespread subjugation to the domestication strategies are many and the picture complex. Overall, it has to do with the possible grounds on which these individuals and communities can make their claims. Here, the small sizes of the communities and churches and their geographical dispersal are significant, and so is the limited economic support from the state. The discourse of active citizenship combined with the incentive of individual success also seems to play a role.

Yet, apart from reflecting the impact of a Danish model of citizenship on a particular migrant community, the above analysis also demonstrates that practices of civic engagement among immigrant

groups are part of a process of “localization and construction of belonging to the place where they live.”<sup>74</sup> Civic engagement, such as efforts to build and sustain a community church, are means to create meaningful everyday lives and local networks among people located in a transnational space for whom citizenship and national belonging is often experienced as contradictory.<sup>75</sup> This was also the case for the young man of Iraqi origin who celebrated his acquisition of Danish legal citizenship in the Coptic Orthodox church. He renounced his Iraqi legal citizenship, but many of those he chose to celebrate this with were of Iraqi origin, since they are the people who make up his meaningful everyday life and local network in Denmark.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Meindert Fennema and Jean Tillie, “Political Participation and Political Thrust in Amsterdam: Civic Communities and Ethnic Networks,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 25, no. 4 (1999): 703–26.

<sup>2</sup> Justin Beaumont and Paul Cloke, “Introduction to the Study of Faith-Based Organizations and Exclusion in European Cities,” in *Faith-Based Organizations and Exclusion in European Cities*, ed. Justin Beaumont and Paul Cloke (Chicago, IL: Polity Press, 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Lise Paulsen Galal, “Between Representation and Subjectivity: Interreligious Dialogue in Denmark,” *Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society* 6, no. 2 (2020): 449–72.

<sup>4</sup> Ingemar Elander, Charlotte Fridolfsson, and Eva Gustavsson, “Swedish Muslims and Secular Society: Faith-Based Engagement and Place,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 26, no. 2 (2012): 145–63.

<sup>5</sup> The Defining and Identifying Middle Eastern Christian Communities in Europe (DIMECCE) project was a collaboration between St. Andrews University, Lodz University, and Roskilde University, and headed by Fiona McCallum.

<sup>6</sup> Christian Joppke, “Transformation of Citizenship: Status, Rights, Identity,” *Citizenship Studies* 11, no. 1 (2007): 38.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Liav Orgad, “Naturalization,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Citizenship*, ed. Ayelet Shachar, Rainer Bauböck, Irene Bloemraad, and Maarten Vink (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 337–57.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 351.

<sup>11</sup> In 2020, precautions due to the Covid19 led to a general exemption from the mandatory handshake until restrictions by the health authorities are lifted, see Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet, "Deltagelse i kommunal grundlovsceremoni," accessed 11 January 2021, <https://uim.dk/arbejdsomrader/statsborgerskab/udenlandske-statsborgere/betingelser/deltagelse-i-kommunal-grundlovsceremoni>.

<sup>12</sup> For more about the possibility of obtaining Danish citizenship, see Ministry of Housing and Migration, "Statsborgerskab," accessed 22 January 2020, <https://uim.dk/arbejdsomrader/statsborgerskab>.

<sup>13</sup> Akademiet for Migrationsstudier i Danmark, *Integrationsforskningen i Danmark 1980-2002* (Copenhagen: Ministeriet for Flygtninge, Indvandrere og Integration, 2002).

<sup>14</sup> Aiwa Ong, "Cultural Citizenship as Subject-Making: Immigrants Negotiate Racial and Cultural Boundaries in the United States," *Current Anthropology* 37, no. 5 (1996): 737-62.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Joppke, "Transformation of Citizenship," 44.

<sup>17</sup> Per Mouritsen and Tore Vincents Olsen, "Denmark Between Liberalism and Nationalism," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36, no. 4 (2013): 691-710; Yasemin N. Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Karen Fog Olwig and Karsten Paerregaard, "Introduction: Strangers in the Nation," in *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion, and the Danish Welfare State*, ed. Karen Fog Olwig and Karsten Paerregaard (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 1-29.

<sup>18</sup> Steffen Jöhncke, "Integrating Denmark: the Welfare State as a Nation(alist) Accomplishment," in *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion, and the Danish Welfare State*, ed. Karen Fog Olwig and Karsten Paerregaard (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 30-53; see also Marianne Gullestad, "Invisible Fences: Egalitarianism, Nationalism and Racism," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8, no. 1 (2002): 45-63.

<sup>19</sup> Marianne Holm Pedersen, *Iraqi Women in Denmark: Ritual Performance and Belonging in Everyday Life* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2014); Olwig and Paerregaard, "Introduction: Strangers in the Nation."

<sup>20</sup> Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet, *Residence and self-sufficiency declaration*, accessed 8 January 2021, <https://uim.dk/arbejdsomrader/Integration-af-nye-borgere/kontrakt-og-opholds-selvforsorgelseserklæring>.

<sup>21</sup> Joppke, "Transformation of Citizenship," 39.

<sup>22</sup> Ghassan Hage, "The Spatial Imaginary of National Practices: Dwelling - Domesticated/Being - Exterminating," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 14 (1996): 467; see also Mikkel Rytter, "'The Family of Denmark'

and 'the Aliens': Kinship Images in Danish Immigration Politics," *Ethnos* 75, no. 3 (2010): 301–22.

<sup>23</sup> Lov om trossamfund uden for folkekirken (Law on Religious Communities outside Folk Churches), Law no 1533, 19/12/2017, <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/r0710.aspx?id=196402>.

<sup>24</sup> Lisbet Christoffersen and Niels Valdemar Vinding, *Danish Regulation of Religion, State of Affairs and Qualitative Reflections: A Report on 20 Qualitative Elite Interviews* (Copenhagen: Centre for European Islamic Thought, Faculty of Theology, University of Copenhagen, 2012), 12.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>26</sup> Hage, "The Spatial Imaginary of National Practices," 472.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 484.

<sup>28</sup> Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet, *Residence and self-sufficiency declaration*, accessed 8 January 2021, <https://uim.dk/arbejdsmrader/Integration-af-nye-borgere/kontrakt-og-opholds-og-selvforsorgelseserklæring>.

<sup>29</sup> This is not his real name. All names in this article are pseudonyms.

<sup>30</sup> Salim, interview by authors, Aarhus, Denmark, 8 March 2014.

<sup>31</sup> Sara Lei Sparre, "(In)visibility and the Muslim Other: Narratives of Flight and Religious Identity among Iraqi Christians in Denmark," *Ethnicities* (2020).

<sup>32</sup> Hage, "The Spatial Imaginary of National Practices," 471. While this has not been the case in Denmark, the parliamentary election campaign in spring 2015 may indicate a new direction, as a conservative politician started his political campaign with a new discourse on the superiority of Christianity, and how Christianity is the basis for the Danish society. This may offer Christian migrants new possibilities for claiming sameness due to their Christian background.

<sup>33</sup> Pedersen, "Iraqi Women in Denmark," 11.

<sup>34</sup> From September 2015, immigrants in Denmark were able for the first time be able to claim dual nationality or double legal citizenship (*statsborgerskab*), pointing towards a more tolerant attitude towards immigrants having transnational attachments, which can be interpreted as a slightly reduced focus on "sameness" at the level of legal citizenship. Justitsministeriet, "Regeringen indgår bred aftale om dobbelt statsborgerskab," 2014, accessed 8 January 2021, <https://www.justitsministeriet.dk/pressemeddelelse/regeringen-indgaar-bred-aftale-om-dobbelt-statsborgerskab/>. The immigrants, however, still have to subscribe to "cultural citizenship" in order to obtain the legal citizenship. Moreover, the Minister of Justice promote this law on double citizenship to opponents from the right wing as opening a legal pathway to deporting more criminal immigrants and stripping them of their Danish

legal citizenship. Before, this was impossible due to the proscription on deporting stateless people. Berlinske, "Dobbelt statsborgerskab kan føre til flere udvisninger af kriminelle," 2014, accessed 20 April 2015, <https://www.berlingske.dk/politik/dobbelt-statsborgerskab-kan-foere-til-flere-udvisninger-af-kriminelle>. As such, this also points towards an attitude to immigrants with transnational ties as being second rank citizens with higher maximum penalty than immigrants who choose to break ties with their former nationality and become "the same" as Danes.

<sup>35</sup> Hage, "The Spatial Imaginary of National Practices," 482–84.

<sup>36</sup> Levitt and Glick-Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultaneity," 1002–39.

<sup>37</sup> Pedersen, "Iraqi Women in Denmark."

<sup>38</sup> Danmarks Statistik, *Indvandrere i Danmark 2019* (Copenhagen: Danmarks Statistik, 2019), 17, 20, [www.dst.dk/publ/indvandreridk](http://www.dst.dk/publ/indvandreridk).

<sup>39</sup> All numbers are estimates because no official statistics cover religious affiliation. Instead, the numbers are based on calculations made by the congregations themselves and by Migrantmenigheder & Migrantkor ([www.migrantmenigheder.dk](http://www.migrantmenigheder.dk)) and the Cross-Cultural Centre (<http://www.tvaerkulturelt-center.dk/>) in Denmark.

<sup>40</sup> Other groups are Christians from Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan, as well as Armenians. These are very small groups and do not have their own churches in Denmark.

<sup>41</sup> Although a halt to immigration was announced by the government in 1973, limited levels of immigration continued through, for example, family reunification. See Karen Fog Olwig and Karsten Paerregaard, eds., *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion, and the Danish Welfare State* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011).

<sup>42</sup> Danmarks Statistik, "FOLK2: Folketal 1. januar efter køn, alder, herkomst, oprindelsesland og statsborgerskab," Statistikbanken, accessed 13 November 2020, <https://www.statistikbanken.dk/statbank5a/default.asp?w=1097>.

<sup>43</sup> For more about emplacement of Middle Eastern Christians, see Lise Paulsen Galal, Alistair Hunter, Fiona McCallum, Sara Lei Sparre, and Marta Wozniak-Bobinska, "Middle Eastern Christian Spaces in Europe: Multi-sited and Super-diverse," *Journal of Religion in Europe* 9, no. 1 (2016): 1–25.

<sup>44</sup> Danmarks Statistik, *Indvandrere i Danmark 2019*, 47.

<sup>45</sup> Danmarks Statistik, *Indvandrere i Danmark 2019*, 48–9.

<sup>46</sup> Sara Lei Sparre and Lise Paulsen Galal, "Incense and Holy Bread: The Sense of Belonging through Ritual among Middle Eastern Christians in Denmark," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44, no. 16 (2018): 2649–66.

<sup>47</sup> A Demand for Action is "a global initiative to support the protection of the Assyrians (including Syriacs/Chaldeans) and other minorities in Iraq & Syria." See "A Demand for Action," Facebook, accessed 28 November 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/DemandforAction>.

<sup>48</sup> The Assyrian Democratic Movement is an ethnic Assyrian political party in Iraq based on national patriotic democratic political goals of recognitions of the rights of Assyrians.

<sup>49</sup> Lise Paulsen Galal, "Copts in Diaspora: Transnational Belonging as 'Home' is Changing," in *Border Terrains: World Diasporas in the 21st Century*, ed. Allyson Eamer (Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2012), 85–94; Lise Paulsen Galal, "'If I Want to Travel, I just Travel,' Travels and Dwellings among Assyrians and Copts in Denmark," in *Middle Eastern Christians and Europe: Historical Legacies and Present Challenges*, ed. Andreas Schmoller (Vienna: LIT Verlag, 2018), 125–45.

<sup>50</sup> For more on the meaning of sensorial and bodily engagement with church rituals and its materialities for belonging and identification as Middle East Christian in Denmark, see Sparre and Galal, "Incense and Holy Bread."

<sup>51</sup> Father Moussa, interview by authors, Taastrup, Denmark, 11 June 2014.

<sup>52</sup> Dina El-Khawaga, "The Laity at the Heart of the Coptic Clerical Reform," in *Between Desert and City: The Coptic Orthodox Church Today*, ed. Nelly van Doorn-Harder and Kari Vogt (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture/Novus Forlag, 1997); Wolfram Reiss, *Erneuerung in der Koptisch-Orthodoxen Kirche. Die Geschichte der koptisch-orthodoxen Sonntagsschulbewegung und die Aufnahme ihrer Reformsätze in den Erneuerungsbewegungen der Koptisch-Orthodoxen Kirche der Gegenwart* (Hamburg: LIT Verlag, 1998).

<sup>53</sup> Father Moussa, interview by authors, Taastrup, Denmark, 11 June 2014.

<sup>54</sup> Salim, interview by authors, Aarhus, Denmark, 8 March 2014.

<sup>55</sup> The Ancient Church of the East and the Chaldean Catholic Church have their patriarchates in Iraq, the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt, and the Assyrian Church of the East in the United States.

<sup>56</sup> Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet, *Residence and self-sufficiency declaration*, accessed 8 January 2021, <https://uim.dk/arbejdsomrader/Integration-af-nye-borgere/kontrakt-og-opholds-og-selvforsorgelseserklæring>.

<sup>57</sup> Signe Kjær Jørgensen, "Interviewet og hvad så? En kritisk analyse af Asmaa Abdol-Hamids betingelser for selvfremsstilling," *Tidsskrift for Islamforskning – Islam og minoriteter* 2 (2010).

<sup>58</sup> Salah El-Matari, "Tre migrantkirker om homoseksualitet, abort og kvindelige præster," *Kristeligt Dagblad*, 5 September 2013, <https://www.kristeligt-dagblad.dk/kirke-tro/tre-migrantkirker-om-homoseksualitet-abort-og-kvindelige-pr%C3%A6ster>.

<sup>59</sup> Marcus, interview by authors, Aarhus, Denmark, 30 June 2014.

<sup>60</sup> Amira, interview by authors, Copenhagen, Denmark, 24 June 2014.

<sup>61</sup> Fadi, interview by authors, Copenhagen, Denmark, 17 June 2014.



<sup>62</sup> Nineb, interview by authors, Aarhus, Denmark, 29 June 2014.

<sup>63</sup> Susan, interview by authors, Copenhagen, Denmark, 26 March 2014.

<sup>64</sup> Grace Davie, "Is Europe an Exceptional Case?" *International Review of Mission* 95 (2006): 247–58.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Leah, interview by authors, Copenhagen, Denmark, 18 June 2014.

<sup>67</sup> Hanan, interview by authors, Copenhagen, Denmark, 20 May 2014.

<sup>68</sup> Sparre and Galal, "Incense and Holy Bread."

<sup>69</sup> Ismail, interview by authors, Copenhagen, Denmark, 10 February 2014.

<sup>70</sup> Rubow, "Religion and Integration: Three Danish Models."

<sup>71</sup> Graham Huggan, *The Postcolonial Exotic* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 22.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>73</sup> Karen Fog Olwig, "Narratives of Home: Visions of 'Betterment' and Belonging in a Dispersed Caribbean Family," in *Caribbean Narratives of Belonging. Fields of Relations, Sites of Identity*, ed. Jean Besson and Karen Fog Olwig (Oxford: Macmillan Caribbean, 2005), 189–205.

<sup>74</sup> Pedersen, "Iraqi Women in Denmark," 2.

<sup>75</sup> Ong, "Cultural Citizenship as Subject-Making," 737–62.